GEMS WESTMINSTER SCHOOL, SHARJAH









Newsletter Issue #15 27th November, 2025



Message from the Principal/CEO Ms. Valerie Thompson

Dear WSS Parents,

Wishing all our dear families a very happy, safe & blessed 54th Eid Al Etihad National

Day weekend & Winter Break. It has been a long Term, but together we have made it though successfully & your children have enjoyed some amazing learning & leadership experiences. Happy New Year 2026!

pates for Your Diary

Date	Details
Monday 1/12/25 & Tuesday 2/12/25	School closed for UAE National Day 54th Eid AL Etihad holiday.
Thursday 4th Decem- ber	• Last day of T1. Students are expected to attend until last day.
Monday 5/1/26	First day of Term 2.T2 Fees due, thank you.











Our Vision; 'Excellence Through Teamwork; Success For All'

مدرسة جيمس ويستمينستر الشارقة

النشرة الإخبارية رقم # 15 27 نوفمبر 2025













المقراعيد	
التفاصيل	التاريخ
 المدارس مظفة بمناسبة اليوم الوطني الـ54 لدولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة وعيد الاتحاد. 	الانتين 1/12/25 والثلاثاء 2/12/25
 آخر يوم في الفصل الدراسي الأول. ومن المتوقع أن يحضر الطلاب حتى آخر يوم. 	الخميس 4 ديسمبر
 اليوم الأول من الفصل الدراسي الثاني. رسوم T2 المستحقة، شكرًا لك. 	الاشين 5/1/26

رسالة من المديرة / الرئيس التنفيذي السيدة فاليري تومبسون

> أولياء أمور مدرسة جيمس ويستمينستر الشارقة الأعزاء،

نتمنى لجميع عائلاتنا الأعزاء عيذا سعيدا وآمنا ومباركا بمناسبة عيد الاتحاد الرابع والخمسين وعطلة نهاية الأسبوع والعطلة الشتوية. لقد كانت فترة طويلة، ولكن معًا نجحنا في اجتيازها واستمتع أطفالك ببعض

تجارب التعلم والقيادة المذهلة. سنة جديدة سعيدة 2026!









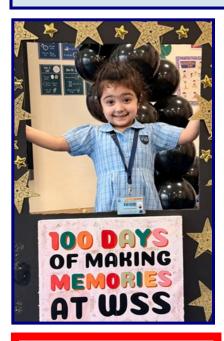
رؤيتنا؛ "التميز من خلال العمل الجماعي؛ النجاح للجميع"

Contents

Parent Handbook Access QR

The most important gifts you can give your child are a quality education and the values that will guide them through life

Sunny Varkey



Find our updated Parent Handbook through this QR code. Check-out school policies & procedures to be familiar & comfortable with our system.



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Whole School News; UAE Eid AL Etihad 54th National Day Celebration Entertainment by Students, 27/11/25!

















































































































This amazing painting was created by our very talented artist & was part of our special Reception display to mark National Day Eid Al Etihad celebrations on 27/11/25.!

















Whole School News; 100 Days at WSS Celebration, 26/11/25!







Whole School News; 100 Days at WSS Celebration, 26/11/25!













Whole School News; 'We Promised...We Delivered...' The WSS T1 Excellence Plan Report!



WSS Excellence Plan, 2025-2026 Term 1 Review

GEMS Core Value	WSS Focus Areas for the Year	WSS Plan	T1 Actions Done	WSS Next Steps Term 2
Excellence	Teaching & Learning Reading External Results	Improve teaching and learning through delivering Teach Like a GEM with fidelity. Improve literacy by embedding Read Like a GEM across the school. Improve behaviour by delivering Be a GEM with Fidelity. Further improve our board examination results (GCSE, AS and A Level) so that they meet world averages. Further improve outcomes in other external assessments. Leverage the latest advancements in technology to make education more interactive	 TLAG strategies are adapted for Early Years. TLAG expectations were aligned with the GEMS central calendar and implemented consistently across all phases. Targeted professional development sessions were conducted to strengthen teachers' understanding of TLAG strategies, with a particular focus on questioning techniques, modelling, and structured practice. Lesson observations and Drop in's indicated improved use of TLAG routines, especially in lesson structure, student engagement, and feedback strategies. Read Like a GEM was fully rolled out across all year groups, with teachers integrating its routines during guided reading, whole-class reading, and independent reading sessions. A parent coffee morning was conducted to raise awareness of the universal and targeted literacy provision. Parents were guided on how to support reading at home. 	 Continue the implementation of TLAG strategies in alignment with the GEMS calendar. Maintain consistent use of Reading Wise and Flash Academy, with progress checkpoints scheduled for the end of February. Ensure regular review of students' reading logs, with recognition and appreciation for their ongoing efforts. Read like GEM leaders' assembly will be conducted in T2 to celebrate the reading initiative across the section. Drop ins and LO will be recorded on Steplab in line with GGW. Analyze data from Reading wise and Flash Academy to track the impact. BAG certificates for achieving the required points will be awarded. Analyze mock 1 outcome and make informed choices for intervention classes and program. Second round of individual teacher data meetings will be conducted to align the goals set
		and effective.	The GEMS Reading Challenge was introduced in preparation for the winter break to further foster reading habits at home. Behaviour expectations under Be a GEM were reintroduced at the beginning of the term and consistently reinforced through assemblies and class routines. Teachers implemented GEM behaviour strategies across lessons, focusing on positive reinforcement, clear routines, and restorative conversations. PDs and practice clinics conducted by TLC in line with TLAG calendar.	

Whole School News; 'We Promised...We Delivered...' The WSS T1 Excellence Plan Report!

Core Value Area	SS Focus as for the Year	WSS Plan	T1 Actions Done	WSS Next Steps Term 2
			Conducted NGRT and students enrolled in Reading wise and flash academy platform for intervention. Be a GEM ambassador instated, and the BAG expectations were introduced in classes. Positive behaviour points recording opened on Phoenix. Intervention classes and winter study program are in place. Individual teacher data meetings and goal settings completed.	
	Curricul um Review Inclusion	programmes to ensure that the achievements of every child are recognised.	 Early interventions are in place for students identified in all 3 waves. A Be a GEM support plan was established for students identified as being at risk, strengthening both pastoral and academic support for vulnerable learners. Daily routines and behavioural expectations were consistently embedded in line with Be a GEM. 	 Midterm progress checks will be conducted by the end of February. Strengthen targeted support by reviewing and updating at-risk student plans and ensuring timely early interventions across all phases. Enhance holistic development by evaluating curriculum delivery and using wellbeing data to refine wellness and pastoral programmes.
		education that supports students' holistic development. Review our inclusion provision to ensure that our most vulnerable students are receiving the necessary support to help them flourish both pastorally and academically. Monitor student wellbeing to ensure our wellness programmes are effective and use data to improve student wellbeing further. Continue to embrace Family First to further deepen our connection with our parents and deliver our promise to them.	embedded in line with Be a GEM promoting a positive, structured, and supportive school environment. Family First initiatives— including breakfasts, in-class reading programmes, and various parental engagement activities— were conducted to strengthen school—home partnerships and enhance support for WSS families. Positive behavior points recording on Phoenix introduced in all lessons. Curricula reviewed and requirements to introduce BTEC qualification explored	 Deepen parent partnerships by expanding Family First initiatives and increasing opportunities for meaningful school-home engagement. Diversification of learners into similar ability groups and reset the TT to accommodate. BTEC qualification awareness session would be conducted for stakeholders PASS survey will be conducted and data analyzed.

Whole School News; 'We Promised...We Delivered...' The WSS T1 Excellence Plan Report!

GEMS	WSS Focus	WSS Plan	T1 Actions Done	WSS Next Steps
Core Value	Areas for the Year			Term 2
One Team	Be A GEM Behavio ur	Ensure leaders model 'Be a GEM' and go the extra mile in everything they do. We will take action to	Be a GEM initiative consistently modelled and reinforced, with staff and students actively demonstrating the expectations and routines across daily school life.	Review and monitor the behaviour points system, incorporating parent feedback to enhance its effectiveness. Continue celebrating success by BAG certificates
		ensure every child achieves their fullest potential. Share our excellence plan with stakeholders and deliver on it with half-termly evidence. Actively seek feedback, engage in dialogue & collaborate with our families to achieve success. Secure the trust of our stakeholders and serve them with distinction so that they remain with GEMS for Life.	Positive behaviours were recognised and celebrated through the awarding of behaviour points and Be a GEM certificates during assemblies. Assemblies were purposefully themed around Be a GEM expectations and routines to deepen student understanding and strengthen a positive school culture. GEMS leadership stones are introduced and discussed in Year2 assemblies. Senior and middle leaders consistently modelled Be a GEM routines—visibility during transitions, classroom walkthroughs, and prompt followup on behavior concerns. 360 degree is conducted with students, parents and staff. New Joiners NPS, Pulse calls and positive parent emails Staff is supported through coaching, practice clinics, and clear expectations, reinforcing stability	Analyse Phoenix behaviour data fortnightly to identify high achievers, track patterns, and plan targeted support. Increase parental visibility of BAG impact through newsletters, celebration posts, and termly behaviour summaries.
Always Learning	Staff CPD	Use the GEMS playbooks to systemise and codify our educational model to secure consistency and strengthen the GEMS' distinctive brand. This will include delivering Teach Like a GEM,	TLAG, RLAG, and BAG practices were demonstrated in leadership-led clinics and walkthroughs. CPD calendar aligned with school priorities was executed as planned—TLAG clinics, literacy training, and behaviour consistency sessions.	Phase1- CPDs are adapted to meet the needs of Early Years teaching. Expand Steplab usage to capture structured drop-ins and coaching notes aligned with GGW

Whole School News; GEMS Youth Parliament, 25/11/25!

GEMS schools Youth Parliament reps. Attended a session on 25/11/25. The session began with a briefing for students, followed by a panel discussion on bullying and wellbeing led by Dr. Funke, the Corporate Head of Wellbeing. The senior session focused on discussing anti-bullying strategies and solutions to overcome bullying. Meanwhile, the Junior session was engaged in conversations on 'Teach Like a GEM' and 'Stand Up-Speak Out' initiatives. Both groups then presented their discussions and suggestions to the entire audience. The session concluded with an introduction to the next session on Artificial Intelligence, followed by closing remarks and next steps delivered by Ms. Lisa, the Chief Educational Officer.

Well done to Airah Nawaz (Y6GS) & Qazi Ali (Y12BS) for their contribution, & thank you to Ms. Swarupa for accompanying & supporting.













Whole School News; Threads Offer!



Unlock 25% - 60% OFF

The wait is over — **Black Friday** has arrived at Threads, and so have the biggest savings of the season!

From 24th November to 4th December, enjoy massive discounts of 25% to 60% OFF on selected items across our stores.

Whether you're refreshing your wardrobe, shopping school essentials, or picking up your favourite accessories, this is the moment to shop smart and save big—before the year ends.

(Uniforms are excluded from the promotion.)

Some of our Participating Brands:



CARL OSCAR®









Participating Outlets:



Cityland

BURJUMAN

Whole School News; Staff CPD!



WSS is participating in SPEA's AimHigher initiative, promoting meaningful links with local Higher Education providers. This is being supported by our dynamic School Improvement Advisor Ms Lynn, who is facilitating school-Higher Education links. Ms. Swarupa attended the HTC session last week. The initiative aims to promote work-readiness, joint research & other projects to challenge our young learners beyond the classroom.



On Friday 21/11/25, the Principal Ms. Valerie joined other GEMS Principal & Management at the GEMS Principals' Executive. The Agenda included a review & share of best practice around the leadership of school development & Principals were addressed by The Education CEO Ms. Lisa & the Founder & Chairman, Mr. Sunny Varkey.



WSS SLT attended another of Ms. Lynn's Sharjah British School Cluster CPD leadership sessions on 25/11/25, this time hosted by SIPS & SES. The Agenda was around Curriculum Development & Enrichment to meet Individual Learning Needs.

WSS Admin Staff of Term 1 Superstar Champions!



Well-deserved special appreciation certificates for Admin members who have consistently gone 'Above & Beyond' this Term.



Admin Staff of T1 Awards go to our 2 superstar Nurses.

WSS Admin Staff of Term 1 Superstar Champions!



WSS Support Staff of Term 1 Superstar Champions!



WSS Superstar Champions!

Dear Ms. Loannie

Thank you so much for all the support you have given us. From the very first day, we have felt your constant encouragement and kindness. Your academic excellence, along with your warm and thoughtful approach, has truly made Sedra feel like a valued member of the GEMS family from day one.

We deeply appreciate your effort and everything you do.

With sincere gratitude,

You are wonderful — truly exceptional.

Sedra's Mother

Congratulations FS2 S2, Y1 D2, Y1 H2, Y2 F, Y2 H2 and Y2 S2! You are the Pizza Party winners of this Term!

Great job on consistently following the 'Be a GEM' expectations and positive behaviour management policy.

Whole School News; This Week's Leadership GEMStone!

DECEMBER – WEEK 48

LEADING WITH UNITY

(3) GARNET

Highlights the importance of teamwork and collaboration.

When we respect and trust each other, we work better as a team. 55

MESSAGE: Leading with unity means bringing people together to work as a team. When you show respect and trust to everyone, you help create a group where everyone feels included and supported. This makes it easier to share ideas, solve problems and succeed together.

REFLECT: How can I bring my team or classmates closer together? What can I do to make sure everyone feels valued and included in what we do?

Environment & Sustainability Superstar Champions!

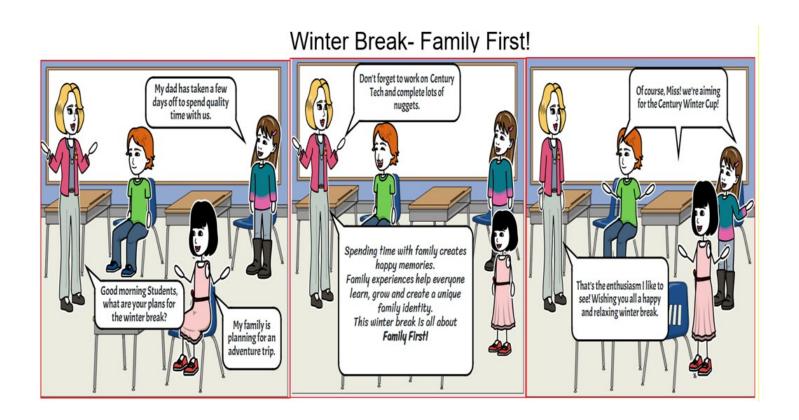




Whole School News; Storyboard Top Tips!

Eid Al Etihad: Celebrating 54 Years of a United Journey





Happy Birthdays!









Junior Section News; Y1# Learning Activities!



WSS Junior Section Superstar Champions—Teacher of T1 Awards!





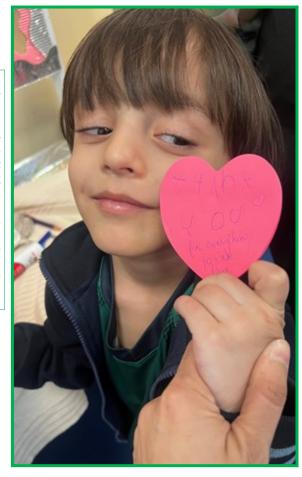
WSS Junior Section Superstar Champions!





Congratulations to our swimming superstar for winning 3 medals & 2 trophies! This reflects a LOT of hard work & dedication to excellence. Well done!

This young superstar learner is taking his first steps with reading & writing. He is working hard at home practicing with his Mum too! Well done Alauddin, Mum & Ms. Sharon for the perseverance, hard work & teamwork!



WSS Junior Section Superstar Champions!



Junior Section News; 100 Days at WSS Celebration, 26/11/25!



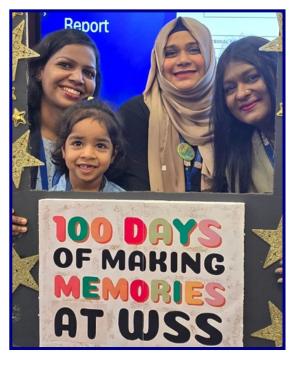




Our new joining families have now completed 100 days at WSS. We welcomed them to a special celebration on 26/11/25, to mark this 'first of many' mile stone. Thank you dear parents for your trust, teamwork & positivity!







Junior Section Leaders Reflection Breakfast, 25/11/25!

Our superstar young leaders reflected on what they have learned so far about leadership, WWW & EBI for next Term's actions. Congratulations to all our Junior Leaders for their effort & hard work with their responsibilities so far!













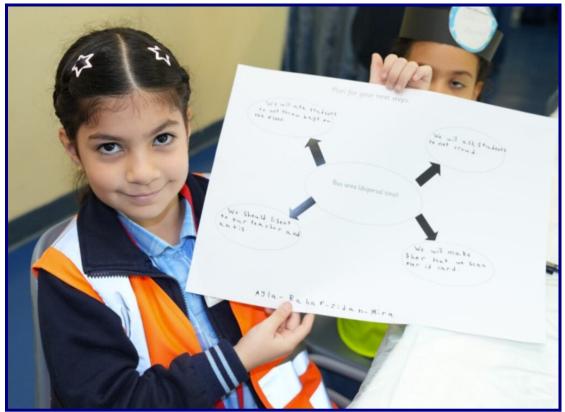




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Junior Section News; UAE National Day Celebration, 27/11/25!

اليوم الوطني – National Day































Junior Section News; UAE National Day Celebration, 27/11/25!

اليوم الوطني – National Day























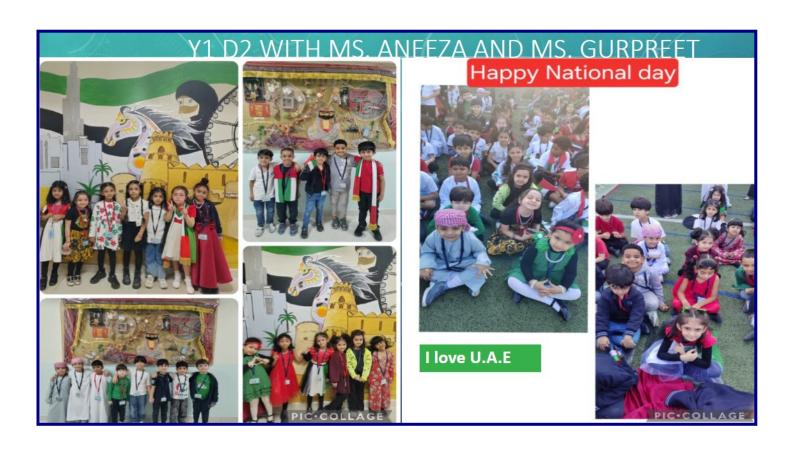






Junior Section News; Y1D Learning Activities!

Y1 D1 with Ms. Beena and Ms. Rahna National Day Celebration National Day Celebration National Day Celebration



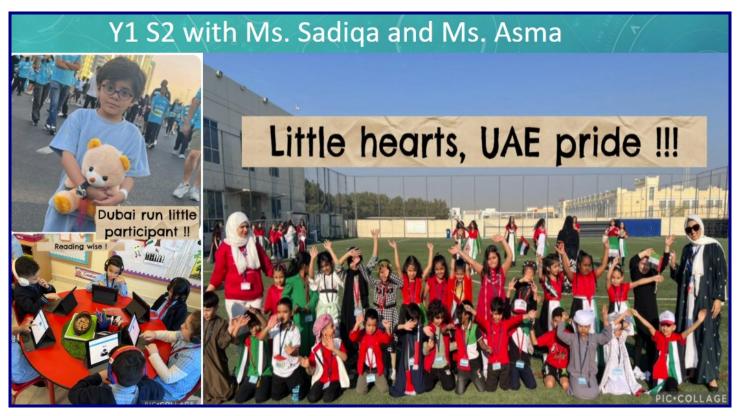
Junior Section News; Y1H Learning Activities!





Junior Section News; Y1S Learning Activities!





Junior Section News; Y2D Learning Activities!



Ms. MILLICENT & Ms. TAHIRA









37 **Y2D2**

Junior Section News; Y2H2 Learning Activities!













CELEBRATING NATIONAL DAY WITH MS SARAH & MS ASHIKA

Junior Section News; Y2H2 Learning Activities!

Junior Section: Y2 H2

Ms. Jinitra and Ms. Jameela







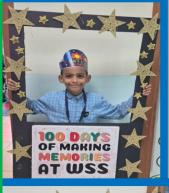






Junior Section News; Y2S2 Learning Activities!

Y2S2-100 days of celebration with Ms. Sabiha and Ms. Benil

















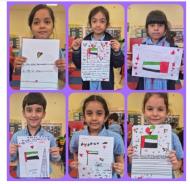
Y2S2-Class activities with Ms. Sabiha and Ms. Benil

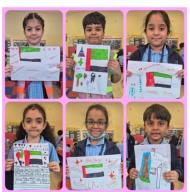












WSS Primary Section Arabic Superstar Champions!

Honouring the Winners of the Arabic Language Competition, Y5 & Y6















WSS Primary Section Superstar Champions—T1 Special Awards!







Congratulations to Ms. Dalal & Ms. Vandana for being awarded 'Teachers of Term 1!



Congratulations again to swimming superstar Mira on winning more medals.

WSS Primary Section Superstar Champions—T1 Special Awards!



Congratulations to Zayan Ruhul (Y6BH) who participated in the Dubai Run 2025. He ran an impressive 16km! Well done Zayan, we are proud of your effort!

Primary Section News; Learning Activities (General)!



Reading is a big developmental goal across school this year. Well done to Sila for her conscientious reading & keeping her 'Read Like a GEM' Reading Log updated. Reading is the key to endless learning & success!



Primary Section News; Y5 Learning Activities!

Year 5's newest learners marked their 100th day at WSS with a series of lively and engaging activities. From collaborative games to creative tasks, students celebrated their progress and the wonderful memories made so far.













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Primary Section News; Y5 Learning Activities!

Year 5 students proudly celebrated the UAE's 54th National Day with lively cultural activities and patriotic enthusiasm, honouring the nation's rich heritage and unity.













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Primary Section News; Y6 Learning Activities!













Primary Section News; Y6 Learning Activities!









Y6 students joyfully celebrated <u>UAE National</u>
<u>Day</u> at school, showcasing their pride through vibrant performances, traditional attire, and engaging activities that highlighted the nation's rich culture and heritage.

WSS Secondary Section Superstar Champions—Special T1 Awards!





WSS Secondary Section Superstar Champions—Special T1 Awards!



Congratulations to Ms. Ayesha Aslam & Ms. Ghousia, Teachers of Term 1!



SLT appreciated all our hard-working & committed Middle Leaders, without whom school would not move forwards. Thank you dear team for all you do!

Secondary Section News; KS3 Parent Voice!

KS3 PARENT VOICE – CELEBRATING OUR WSS FAMILY

At home, we support our child by encouraging good study habits and positive routines. We appreciate the school's guidance and the supportive environment they provide. As parents, we use positive communication and praise to help our child grow with confidence.



Tala Haitham and family-Y7GF

As parents, we make it a point to really listen to our child and understand where she needs support. For subjects that are challenging for her—especially Arabic, which we don't speak at home—we arrange extra tuition and follow up on her progress. The school helps her a lot by having regular assessments, which clearly show her how much she has understood and what she needs to improve. As a family, we always keep some time together before be dtime to talk, laugh and share our day. This routine keeps our bond strong and gives her a safe space to express herself.

Vibha and family-Y7GH



Secondary Section News; KS3 Parent Voice!

We place a high value on regular interaction at home, which helps our kids feel safe and valuable. We also engage in positive reinforcement by acknowledging little accomplishments and efforts rather than concentrating only on the end result. We are incredibly appreciative of the school and its instructors. We feel so much more at ease knowing that our child is in a stimulating, safe environment where their special talents are valued. They are able to flourish academically and socially because of this supportive environment.

Yara and family-Y7GH

We support our children at home by maintaining a routine and keeping open communication about their day. We reinforce good habits through our own patience, kindness, and honesty.

W SS has helped them build essential skills such as team work, responsibility, and independence and provide a nurturing learning atmosphere. Together, this strengthens their academic, social, and emotional development.

Zainab and Family-Y7GF



Secondary Section News; KS3 Parent Voice!

Feeling Grateful!

Truly encouraged by the positive emails from our parents — your kind words keep us motivated and remind us why we love what we do!



Dear Ms Mary

Good evening hope my email finds you well

Thanks for your support you are the key that she loves math she enjoys the way you teach and explain different concepts.

Regards

Radwa fahmy

13501000011508 - Nouren Mohamed- Y8GH



Dear Ms.Mary,

13501000032091 - Malika Karim - Y7GD

Thank you very much for your kind message and for recognizing my daughter's progress. I truly appreciate the time, effort, and dedication you invest in guiding and supporting your students.

Your continuous encouragement and structured approach, especially through the revision materials and regular feedback, make a great difference in building their confidence and understanding. I sincerely value your commitment to helping them achieve their best.

Thank you once again for your hard work and for always being available to support the students.



Dear Ms Mary,

Thank you very much for your kind message and for all the effort and dedication you put into supporting your students.

I truly appreciate the time, patience, and encouragement you give ,it makes a real difference in their learning and confidence.

We're very grateful for your continued guidance and care.

Warm regards,

13501000023107 - Nadin Ahmed Attia - Y7GD



Dear Ms. Mary,

Thank you for your kind message and continuous support. We truly appreciate your guidance and for always being there to support her learning journey.

Regards, Nancy Nofal

13501000033713 - Julia Mohamed - Y8GH

Secondary Section News; KS4 UAE Eid AL Etihad National Day Celebrations, 27/11/25!

UAE NATIONAL DAY







Heres how the KS4 girls spent their day celebrating UAE National Day!
Sharing treats, culture and heritage, with beautiful performances in the fields as well.









A MILESTONE MOMENT: 100 DAYS AT WSS- KS4 GIRLS









Our new joiners participated in a reflective word activity to celebrate 100 days in their new learning environment. Each word written represents their feelings, achievements, and the positive culture of WSS. This meaningful milestone reinforces our commitment to nurturing confident, engaged learners.













